

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2014 – 9:30 A.M. TO 3:30 P.M.

Public Meeting at:

AIRPORT PLAZA HOTEL
1981 TERMINAL WAY
RENO, NEVADA

1. INTRODUCTIONS. The regular meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was called to order. Roll call was taken, and quorum was determined:

Present: Sheila Allred, Pam Alvey, Angela Blair, Mary Bryant, Diana Cannon, Sue Chambers, MaryAnn Demchak, Ann Drendel-Haas, David Frydman, Shirley Gaw, Joseph Holguin, Mary Ellen Horan, Will Jensen, Susan Lacey, Caroline Longre, Kristine Minnich, Tom Pierce, Robin Renshaw, Tara Shek, Carrisa Tashiro, Karen Taycher, Rita Varney, and Robbin Vasquez.

Absent: Laura Bruni, David Coffey, Lisa Erquiaga, Ken Higbee, Bethany Lafferty, Kate McCloskey, Brian Patchett, Dorothy Pomin, Ellen Richardson Adams, and Tammy Rieken,

Staff: Dale Erquiaga, Marva Cleven, and Kim Boles

Public: Samantha King

2. PUBLIC COMMENT #1

No public comments at this time.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 11, 2014 meeting were reviewed and discussed. There were no other changes or corrections offered at this time.

Motion: Will Jensen moved to approve the minutes. Tom Pierce seconded the motion. The vote was called and the motion carried without objection. Robbin Vasquez abstained from the vote.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S VIEWS AND PHILOSOPHY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN NEVADA

Dale Erquiaga shared with the Committee that he has approached his job through an analysis of the Department of Education which has led to a restructuring. He is a believer in moving the state department from compliance to a technical assistance or support role. The State department has been broken into three different divisions. It will function in three buckets. the Division of Business and Support Services, which distributes funding to districts, the Division of Student Achievement, which focuses specifically on the students in the system, and the Division of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, which deals with the adults and parents in the system. The focus of the Department has to be on the kids. Dale will approach special education from the perspective of achievement gaps, he is very focused on what the Department can do to close gaps. The Department sets standards, delivers assessments and publishes accountability information. His goal is to begin to use that information to help schools improve those gaps. He hopes you will see that his decision to change the structure of where special education falls in the Department as indicative of his commitment to those students and educators. Dale is very interested in closing achievement gaps in Special Education. He wants to look very closely at performance management, the Department has created a new position that will get into that world for us. He wants to help with performance management at the school and district level. The Department has a responsibility to help manage performance and improve student achievement outcomes as we provide services.

5. RESTRUCTURING OF SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING IN NEVADA

Dale Erquiaga shared that in Nevada for forty years we have funded special education through units. There is a design flaw it is a system built prior to the current model of instruction it is a system that rewards seclusion. It is a unit, which means a teacher, essentially the unit cost has grown, it has no bearing today on what a teacher actually costs. Currently, the system is to award units out to the districts and then they use those monies and federal special education dollars. We are going through a study to deal with these issues. A task force has been created to make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature around weights for special education. This task force is talking about equity between student groups versus equity in the funding model. There are two main ideas, a technical advisory committee will help with the math, two ideas create a separate bucket of money for high needs students, create a catastrophic fund, the other money would be weighting, identification, or student based funding.

6. ACCOMMODATION FORM

Marva Cleven updated the committee with regard to the accommodation form, she has been working with the Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, changes have been made to the form so it can be used throughout the student's IEP not just the school year, making the form more user friendly for school district personnel.

7. TEACHER LICENSURE

Tom Pierce – Superintendent’s task force to make recommendations. Trying to keep everyone informed. The item was brought forward that we are having difficulty getting teachers, can we combine licenses to accomplish this. Structure to look at one license instead of two licenses. If you do a state by state analysis, our state is the most restrictive. Other states are looking at adaptive curriculum licenses. We have tried to look at national structures. The biggest problem, is someone coming from a different state, we don’t always have a license that corresponds. We won’t give them a license because they haven’t taken the courses specific in Nevada. They have to do a course by course audit of their transcripts to see if they qualify. We have come up with a license called intense educational needs that will be 33 credits. There will be a requirement for all teachers that teach in Autism and intellectual D, to take the following classes.....

MOTION: Mary Bryant made a motion to draft a letter to support the efforts to address teacher shortages, and raise the following issues: replacing “and/or” in the sections IV, V, VI, and VIII. Adding “including augmentative alternative communication” to section VIII under intellectual disabilities. Additional points to discuss: 1. Whether or not the generalist license should include those students with mild autism 2. Whether or not the existing ID and Autism teacher licenses should be maintained for anyone who may come in from out of state (and if they are maintained, should math methods and literacy methods be added to the ID license) 3. Reaching out to the Autism community to ensure that they are in support of the changes and their concerns are addressed. Sue Chambers seconded the motion. The vote was called and the motion carried without objection. Tom Pierce abstained from the vote.

8. NEVADA ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

Marva Cleven provided the SEAC with a handout detailing the history of the Nevada Alternate Assessment (NAA). Many of the committee members stated that the NAA is very time consuming, ineffective and does not provide any useful feedback. They are wondering if there is any data or evidence to support the NAA.

Concerns :

- Equity with general education teachers video taping – those that take the CRT are not required to go through that process
- Video Taping being eliminated or reduced to a random sampling
- Eliminate additional materials
- Representation from Special Education Advisory Committee on the NAA task force
- Reduce the number of questions
- No meaningful feedback
- Opting out easier

- Social/Emotional impact of having these student participate in an assessment process that might be traumatic or anxiety inducing to them
- Two written responses – Scantron and booklet – Is videotaping overkill
- Meaningfulness of the test for this group of students
- What the compliance agreement from OSEP states
- Curriculum for teachers that addresses the full range of students not just those who have moderate disabilities
- How are results used? Are they used to drive instruction?

MOTION: Mary Bryant moved that Marva Cleven send an email to APAC outlining the concerns of the SEAC with regard to NAA. Will Jensen seconded the motion. The vote was called and the motion carried without objection.

9. NEVADA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Marva Cleven reported to SEAC that the NAC Task Force met on April 4, 2014. There were no major changes were made to the document, just cleaning it up and making it more clear. Marva will present any updates at future Special Education Advisory meetings.

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Federal Law – Special Education Advisory Committee Responsibilities
Nevada Alternate Assessment – Basic Requirements Required by OSEP
Nevada Administrative Code Update
Teacher Licensure
Annual Special Education Advisory Committee Report
Adjusted Diploma
Open Meeting Law Lesson
National Employment first
Election of Officers

11. PUBLIC COMMENT #2

No public comments at this time.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Sue Chambers moved to adjourn the meeting. Angela Blair seconded the motion. The vote was called and the motion carried without objection.

The next regular SEAC meeting has not yet been scheduled.